COMMANDERS DIGEST

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Army Announces New Policy On Junior Officer Promotion

New Army promotion policy will make it possible by next May for non-regular junior officers to make captain after two years of extended active duty.

DA Message 837567 of Oct. 24 establishes a new policy regarding promotion of first lieutenants serving on extended active duty.

"Time-in-grade eligibility is gradually reduced so that on May 2 first lieutenants attain eligibility for promotion to captain upon completion of 12 months time-in-grade, computed from their date of rank," the message said.

Time-in-grade eligibility for promotion from second lieutenant to first lieutenant is 12 months.

Those promoted to AUS captaincies may incur an additional year of obligated service.

DOD Officials Give Details On M-16 Rifle Modification

As fast as M-16 rifles are sent from combat zones in Vietnam back to ordnance for routine checking, new barrels with chrome chambers are put on the weapons before they are returned to troops, according to a Department of Defense official.

Meanwhile, each man who has an M-16 is given a new, heavier buffer to put on his rifle, an operation that takes only a few seconds.

No man is ever without a weapon, the official pointed out.

Modified M-16s are also being airlifted to Vietnam. They have the heavier buffer and chrome plating in the chamber. Many rifle chambers have become pitted in Vietnam, causing cartridges to jam.

Military Pay Raise Bill Clears House

The House of Representatives approved by a 385-2 vote Oct. 26, $633 million dollar legislation to raise the pay of members of the armed forces.

The bill, which now goes to the Senate, calls for a 5.6 percent base pay raise, which equals the 4.5 percent pay increase for federal civilian employees also under Congressional consideration.

The pay increase, as approved by the House is retroactive to Oct. 1.

LEGION OF MERIT—Lt. Gen. John A. Heintges (left), Deputy Commander in Chief, U.S. Seventh Army, congratulates departing Brig. Gen. Karl Gustafson after presenting him the First Oak Leaf Cluster for the Legion of Merit Award for his work as USAREUR and Seventh Army Provost Marshal.

President Johnson's Message To Armed Forces on Veterans Day

Freedom has never been without sacrifice.

Americans have known the challenge and sacrifice of conflict during two centuries of gaining and defending our own liberty. Americans from all walks of life and all parts of our country have shouldered arms to protect the freedom we cherish.

We can never repay in full the debt we owe to the veterans of this Nation's wars. But on this Veterans Day, let us pause to remember those who have borne the burden in time of war—those brave Americans who have made sacrifices in behalf of freedom, and often given their lives to preserve it.

And while we honor those who have gone before, let us salute also those veterans of tomorrow—the gallant men and women who are now in the front lines of freedom in Vietnam, and around the world.

Let us renew our pledge to all who today carry on the battle to insure that freedom's bell is never silenced.

/s/ Lyndon B. Johnson

Washington Memos

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION AUTHORIZATION Act for FY68, signed by President Johnson Oct. 21, authorizes $2.3 billion for construction of such projects as air bases, hospitals, barracks and Naval depots. "It will help provide the brick and mortar to modernize our military installations not only in Southeast Asia," President said, "but throughout the world."

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE directive says military personnel under 18 are not eligible to be sent to Vietnam, but may be assigned to sea duty or to duty in other overseas areas.

MAJ. GEN. G. V. UNDERWOOD, JR, assumed command of U.S. Army Air Defense Center, Ft. Bliss, Texas, Oct. 23. Gen. Underwood was formerly CG, 32nd Army Air Defense Command, Kaiserslautern, Germany. He succeeded Maj. Gen. George T. Powers III, who will become CG, XV U.S. Army Corps, Presidio, San Francisco.

FIRST COMPLETED modernized Minuteman II missile wing has been accepted at Whiteman AFB, Mo., marking end of modernization program started there in February 1966. Whiteman AFB's modernization program is first in series at SAC bases involving replacement of Minuteman I missiles with more advanced Minuteman II ICBMs. When program is complete, SAC will have total of 1,000 operational Minuteman II missiles.

RADM. JOHN V. SMITH, USN, has been assigned as 31st United Nations Command Senior Member to Military Armistice Commission in Korea. Adm. Smith succeeds Air Force Maj. Gen. Marvin C. Demler, who will become Commander, Chanute Technical Training Center, Chanute AFB, Ill. Post of UNCMAC senior member is rotated among Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps every six months.

UPDATED AIR FORCE Register (AFP 36-1-1) scheduled for early March 1968 distribution. Air Force said most significant revision planned is to include non-regular officers and warrant officers in Vol. I alphabetical listing. Retired lists in Vol. II will not change.

ARMY AVIATION MATERIEL Command has awarded $9 million contract to Beech Aircraft Corp., Wichita, Kan., for procurement of 41 Army U-21A "Ute" utility aircraft.

MORE THAN 90 senior Navy and Marine Corps supply officers from major commands and aviation activities attended three-day conference at Naval Aviation Supply Office, Philadelphia, Oct. 23-25. Conference was held to exchange information and discuss means of improving logistics of naval aviation.

MAXWELL AFB, ALA., became first of six sites in U.S. to stage flight demonstrations by "Golden Centennaires," aerobatic display team of Canadian Armed Forces, Nov. 1. Team will also perform at Homestead AFB, Fla.; Randolph AFB, Texas; Cannon AFB, NM.; Nellis AFB, Nev., and Kissimmee Naval Air Station, Fla.

TWO CONTRACTS TOTALING $7.5 million have been signed to develop detailed system design for fournation Mallard tactical communications system. Radio Corporation of America and Sylvania Electronics Systems, Inc., received contracts for study of system, which will provide secure, automatically-switched communications system for field armies of partner nations — United States, United Kingdom, Australia and Canada.

AIR FORCE SURGEON General hosts "Research Workshop on Graduate Medical Education in the Air Force" Nov. 13-14 at San Antonio, Tex. Some 20 internationally known civilian medical educators will attend. Purpose of meeting is to insure that Air Force's graduate medical education will be attuned to medical school curriculums and postmedical school education.

VADM. PAUL MASTERTON relieved VAdm. Charles E. Weakley as Commander, Antisubmarine Warfare Force, U.S. Atlantic Fleet, Oct. 31. Adm. Masterton reported from assignment as Navy's Deputy Comptroller in Washington. Adm. Weakley's retirement is effective Nov. 1.

ASSIGNED RECENTLY AS 7th Air Force staff chaplain is Chaplain (Col.) Arthur T. Engell, who serves as an advisor to the 7th Air Force commander and monitors programs conducted by 41 chaplains throughout Vietnam.

NAVY HAS CONTRACTED for a new communications complex which will connect Naval activities in Scotland and Northern Ireland. The facilities will include one of the longest microwave links in existence.

SANTA CLAUS HOUSE again will be maintained by airmen and civilian employees at Eielson AFB, Alaska. Volunteers postmark self-addressed and air mail stamped envelopes, returning them to children of American servicemen. Since 1955 start of program, 84,000 letters have been remailed. Dec. 15 is last deadline to insure arrival by Christmas day.

NAVAL ORDNANCE DIVISION 9-1 (s), Indianapolis, is first unit to become operational under Ordnance Reserve Program which was established to provide qualified naval reserve officers for active duty with Navy Ordnance Systems Command during war or national emergency.

MORE THAN 700 entries are in for the Air Force Photography Contest to be held at Nellis AFB, Nev., Nov. 15-17. Entries represent major command winners. Three top civilian photographers have been selected as judges.

COMMANDERS DIGEST

THIS PUBLICATION CONTAINS OFFICIAL INFORMATION, NEWS AND POLICY, DIRECT FROM WASHINGTON AUTHORIZED SOURCES.

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Background for Commanders

OUR CHALLENGE IN VIETNAM*

Today, we are caught up in a new challenge, a new time of strain, and a new attack on our foreign policy at home . . . Americans are being told not only that it is wrong for us to be in Vietnam, but also that we ought not to be anywhere; that the threat of Communist expansion has vanished, and that we are already living in a world of peaceful coexistence; that our postwar policy, so dramatically challenged in Vietnam, should now be qualified, shrunken, or abandoned. Many of the same leaders who attack our policy in Vietnam also urge substantial cuts in our NATO forces, even if the Soviet Union maintains its force levels in Central Europe, and continues to make massive arms shipments to the Near East.

A Clear Case of Aggression

In the view of our government, the war in Vietnam is like the attack on South Korea, and earlier threats to Greece, Iran and Berlin. It constitutes a clear aggression by a Communist regime supported both by China and the Soviet Union—an attempt to take over another country by force. Whatever view one takes of the origins of the war—whether it is considered an insurrection against the authority of the South Vietnamese state aided by North Vietnam, or, as we believe, an infiltration and invasion from North Vietnam—the issue in international law and politics is the same. In either view, North Vietnam is waging war against South Vietnam. And South Vietnam has the right to ask for the help of the international community in resisting an attack mounted from beyond its borders.

Neither South Vietnam nor the United States wants to conquer North Vietnam, or to overturn its Communist regime. The central issue of the war is whether North Vietnam will be allowed to conquer South Vietnam.

Equilibrium of Power

What is America's national interest in South Vietnam? Why are we there? . . . If South Vietnam were to be taken over, the expansionist forces of Communist China and North Vietnam would be encouraged, and resistance to them and to aggression generally throughout the world would be seriously weakened.

The United States is no less a Pacific than an Atlantic power. Our security demands an equilibrium of power in the Far East as much as it does in Europe and in the Middle East. That equilibrium depends on Vietnam and the system of alliances it symbolizes.

Responsible opinion throughout Southeast Asia believes that the outcome in Vietnam will determine the future alignment of the whole region. Present events in Laos, Thailand, and Burma confirm this widespread judgment.

Above all, at this stage, whether one believes we were right or wrong in getting into Vietnam in the first place, the hostilities in Vietnam have been made the test of America's resolve to maintain that network of security arrangements upon which the equilibrium of world power has come to depend. There would be little security to protect our interests anywhere in the world if America's promise faltered or failed when the going got rough. As President Kennedy once said: "The 1930s taught us a clear lesson: aggressive conduct, if allowed to go unchecked and unchallenged, ultimately leads to war. This nation is opposed to war. We are also true to our word."

Accomplishments Despite Turmoil

It is sometimes contended that it is hopeless to intervene in these explosive situations — that Asia, South America and Africa are doomed to go through revolutionary turmoil of many kinds, and that nothing can be done to stem the flood.

The simplest answer to this counsel of despair lies in the accomplishments of many developing states, often achieved in the face of threats both from within and without: Iran, for example, and Thailand, Israel, South Korea, Taiwan, and Malaysia. Others, like Indonesia, have turned sharply from adventurism to policies of peace and economic development. All over the world, countries are seeking to apply for themselves, and in their own ways, the economic and social methods of that enlightened capitalism which has permitted the United States and the other free advanced nations to accomplish the most successful social revolution of the twentieth century.

Under the umbrella provided by American power, vitality and creative energy have, in fact, gradually returned to many parts of the world once demoralized by war, communism and the general disruption of the times. The revival of Western Europe has encouraged great democratic nations to resume an active role in the world. In the Pacific, Japan has acquired splendid prosperity and stable democracy. These developments among old and new allies open up a new vista of possibilities for the creation of a broadly based cooperative world system.

We have made progress, but we are not at the brink of Utopia. The revival of Europe and the apparent mellowing of some Communist nations pose dangers as well as opportunities. Some Europeans, like some Americans, are tempted by irresponsibility . . . In short, we shall be living in a troubled world for a long time. There will be no magic solutions abroad, as there are none at home.

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* *Excerpts from a recent address by Eugene V. Rostow, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs.*

SecDef's Veterans Day Message to Armed Forces

In the early days of this country our forefathers went into battle against a tyranny which would not permit them to have freedom.

Down through the years, generation after generation of descendants of those Revolutionary warriors have also fought with courage and devotion against tyranny.

Our Nation always has been a bulwark against the threat of those who would take away our freedom. At great costs in men and money, we have fought and we have won precious victories.

And today, far across the whitecaps of the broadest ocean in the world, thousands of our gallant young men are again fighting in Vietnam so that freedom might not be lost to aggression.

On Veterans Day of 1967, I take this opportunity to pay tribute to America's fighting men and women of past and present who show the heritage of dedicated service in the cause of freedom.

/s/ Robert S. McNamara

Army Seeks Volunteers From RVN for Korean Duty

Army is encouraging men with Vietnam experience to volunteer for duty in Korea to provide highly trained and qualified personnel for service there.

Recent DA Message 836157 said a Vietnam returnee may volunteer for ROK assignment provided he is not a drill sergeant or if the move would constitute a second PCS within the same fiscal year.

Personnel in Vietnam may apply directly for inter-theater transfer to Korea, but officials at the Pentagon cautioned the application rules out "space-required" transportation to CONUS for leave.

Army also is encouraging other personnel to volunteer for Korea. They must, however, meet the full criteria.

Maj. Howard V. Lee, USMC, Receives Medal of Honor

Marine Maj. Howard V. Lee, who disregarded his own multiple wounds and led a relief force through enemy positions to one of his outnumbered platoons has become the seventh Marine to be awarded the Medal of Honor for heroism in Vietnam.

President Johnson presented the nation's highest award to Major Lee in ceremonies at the White House Oct. 25.

Maj. Howard V. Lee, USMC

At the time of his heroic action in Vietnam on August 8 and 9, 1966 Maj. Lee, then captain, was serving as Commanding Officer, Company E Fourth Marines, 3rd Marine Division A platoon of his company was operating deep in enemy-controlled territory when the unit was attacked and surrounded by a large North Vietnamese force.

Captain Lee volunteered to take seven of his men by helicopter to reinforce the platoon. When the Captain and his small unit arrived in the area, the platoon was still under heavy enemy attack.

The citation accompanying the award reads in part:

"Major Lee disembarked from the helicopter with two of his men and braving withering enemy fire, led them into the perimeter, where he fearlessly moved from position to position, directing and encouraging the overtaxed troops. The enemy then launched a massive attack with the full might of their forces.

"Although painfully wounded by fragments from an enemy grenade in several areas of his body, including his eye, Major Lee continued undauntedly throughout the night to direct the valiant defense, coordinate supporting fires, and apprise higher headquarters of the plight of the platoon.

"The next morning he collapsed from his wounds and was forced to relinquish command. However the small band of Marines had held their position and repeatedly fought off many vicious enemy attacks for a grueling six hours until their evacuation was effected the following morning."

AF Makes Training Plans For OV-10 FAC Aircraft

Air Force is drawing up training plans for the new OV-10 forward air controller aircraft expected to be delivered early next year.

Keesler AFB, Miss., will establish courses to train an initial 17-man cadre in avionics, while 117 Air Force personnel will be sent to factory training courses.

Tactical Air Command will give field training for overseas replacements at Hurlburt Field, Fla.

The Navy-managed OV-10 system is a combined forward air controller and strike aircraft which can land and take off from unimproved runways and requires a minimum of maintenance.

The plane is specifically designed to give close air support firepower to ground operations in areas where enemy air opposition is not a serious threat.

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